

DIB DIB DIB

46

"Wait, you
forgot
your
Dib
Dib
Dib"



Welcome to the 46th issue of Dib Dib Dib - a rustic, homely little tome, dedicated to the hundreds of nutcases out there who are interested in nothing else other than frittering away their precious time playing games, chatting about the inconsequential without coming to any conclusions, and who generally like to make nuisances of themselves when it comes to getting at yours truly and his G.Ming. Cost of this issue 23p + postage (40p in the UK). Anyone wishing to send me money, send to Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks., HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513

EDITORIAL

This has been a bit of a hectic month for me. As you know (I mentioned last issue) straight after I finished Dib 45 I had to concentrate on getting out the bi monthly Spots of News. This is normally okay, as the zine/newsletter is generally not as large as Dib - only averaging out to twelve of so pages. The trouble is this time there seemed to be thousands of odds and ends to get out of the way - and all at differing times. First Spots was sent out, that's 900 envelopes, labels and stamps to be stuck on, down, and whatever. Then a couple of days after that the Minutes of the AGM had to be sent out, along with certain voting papers, new judging lists, an application form, oh you name it, we had to do it, that meant another 500 labels, envelopes and stamps. Do you know, going full belt and non stop my printer takes nearly 4 hours to print the labels? I was up to my ears in envelopes, labels and stamps - Jan just didn't work fast enough; it was three days before I found the settee.

Mind you, like most of us it all started merely as a hobby! One day I said to Jan, "wouldn't it be nice if we had a dog." That's all I said, nothing else. I dread to think what might happen when we finally get the small-holding we've been talking about - I'll probably have to start up something like Amalgamated Agricultural News or something, and that's without having to show the horse, goats, pigs, ducks and other livestock! (Is there any other livestock?) Oh for the quiet life when all I had to do was dive for and defuse bombs....

WORRIED OF AMERSHAM - SUBTITLED. "Hello Jon need a new computer? Hello Jon need a new computer?"

Yep... now after all this time my computer is letting me down. This is one of the reasons why this issue of Dib is so late - I hope it lasts/hangs in there until I get the man out. Alas the dear old Apple has been going wrong for the last week or so now, I'm having difficulty in booting/powering up. It's probably nothing much to worry about as to getting it fixed, but from what I can gather it'll be expensive, though probably only the transformer. The most worrying feature is that technology seems to have moved ahead at such a pace that computers like mine are now way out of date, and spare parts for these 'ancient' machines might soon become hard to come by. A ridiculous state of affairs. Anyway, I've decided to get rid of the lovable old workhorse before I overwork it. So....

If anyone out there knows someone who wants a 4 year old 64K Apple II+ with green screen monitor, two Apple disk drives, a Z80 CP/M card, serial printer card, and 'Vision 80' 80 column card, plus tons of software: dBASE II, Applewriter II, DOS Toolkit, List Handler, 3 Wizardry scenarios, Ultima II and lots of other games, plus all the manuals, please let me know. As that lot is worth half what it cost, second-hand it should go for £850. A lot of money so I'm willing to split.

As for the computer to replace it, if I can afford it I'll get either a 256K IBM PC with 2 double sided 360K disk drives, or the much cheaper 100% IBM compatible Canon A-200, which has a similar configuration, but I believe runs much faster. With that amount of memory it should be a cinch to produce Dib - especially as I'm hoping to be using Wordstar. Not that I'm getting such a machine solely for producing Dib you understand - no way, I need the extra size because I want to store Dalmatian pedigrees, their breeding defects, ailments and suchlike, and

that takes a large database. Mind you, the PC/Canon also has going for them the fact that Wizardry can be run on them.

As yet I can't tell if any of this is likely to affect Dib - it should do to some extent I suppose, but I can't really say how much. One blot on the horizon, if I can't get my Applewriter II word processing files copied onto the Wordstar files then it'll mean I'll have retype them all again. To some extent this will slow me down, but not to worry Jan'll soon get the hang of it, then things should pick up again. More worrying though is the 900+ address labels I might have to re-type - I hope there's some copying program that can change these over!

GLADYS AWARDS: Steve Norledge, editor of Rapscallion has now announced that he will be taking over the running of the Gladys Awards. Damn the man, I wanted to do these but thought John Miller, the originator, was taking them on. These awards were much loved because (a) they were a light hearted run up to Richard Walkerdine's Zine Poll, and (b) quite a lot of people thought they were fairer because they gave credit where credit was due in the different categories. All this is true - why, Dib won the Best Lettercolumn category for 2 years running. The categories will be:-

1. Best Zine; 2. Best Diplomacy Zine; 3. Best Games Zine; 4. Best Chat Zine; 5. Best Personal Zine; 6. Best Diplomacy GM; 7. Best Games GM; 8. Best Letter Column; 9. Best Looking Zine; 10. Best New Zine; 11. Best Zine for Hobby News; 12. Most Improved Zine; 13. Best Player.

I don't much go for category 5 about 'Personal Zines' because I don't believe there's any such thing. My zine is about as personal as it can get for me, and I suppose it's much the same for any other editor running a games zine. A silly ambiguous category. Still if it's what Steve wants... Anyway, first of all he wants nominations for the above categories e.g. Dib for Best Zine/Best 2/3/4/etc. And the results should be first published in the April edition of Rap. Of course it goes without saying I'll then publish them in the following issue of Dib. Deadline for these nominations: Friday 12th April. All nominations should be sent to Steve Norledge, Q30 Connaught Hall, Wessex Lane, Swaythling, Southampton, SO9 1XW. Do your best to vote - I think the awards are worthwhile.

At long last something is being done (on a regular basis) about the flyers in Diplomacy boxes. When I first joined the hobby, word was going round that although this was the best way of attracting new members into the hobby, nothing much could be done about it because of lack of funds. The typical hobby crunch. Keeping this in mind, when I took over the Diplomacy CGS it seemed to me that charging x1 per game to editors might be a good way of raising the money - and also deterring the fly-by-night cheapskate editors from taking on novice games and dropping them afterwards. It worked, and the money was raised, however, although Richard Morris has the Diplomacy Box Flyers in hand (well done, Richard) it seems the money is supplied from somewhere else. One just cannot win. As to the flyer itself: it will request an SAE to be sent to Richard, and a 2-4 page introduction to the game of postal Diplomacy plus details of the CGS etc will be returned.

Anyway, onto a different subject (my pet subject, Calcraft bashing). What on earth is happening about Boardman Numbers? You may well ask. It has been some time since we've had anything of relevance from our Diplomacy Statsman, Pete Calcraft. Some might argue that no stats are reaching the hobby at all! Surely not - after all the promises? But, I'll leave the subject of the stats alone for the time being - once again I ask, what about the Boardman Numbers? I did ask Pete Calcraft for some, who then put out a temporary flyer a couple of months back saying that he's far too busy to put out any stats, and, that if anyone wants any Boardman numbers they should contact Peter Northcott. I did, and Peter Northcott writes back:-

"Re your request for Boardman Numbers: There seems to be some confusion and misunderstanding here. I will not be taking on any stats job until July or August, at the earliest. My finals are now less than 3 months away,

therefore my hobby activity is as low as it's ever been."

Great. What am I trading with Pete Calcraft for? So he can have a full set of stats for his own use and amusement? For heavens sake someone step in and take the bloody things off him! Give the hobby back its OWN stats.

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HINTS FROM A GENTLER AND BYGONE AGE

Once again I dip into the old and faded pages of a book called 'Consult Me' to gain and resurrect knowledge long since lost to today's modern housewife. Some of you might think, seemingly, this was a good thing - well, for that I cannot say. All I know is that if I ever tried to get Jan to follow the hints given below, even I would get short shrift. (Yes, she has been known to rebel sometimes.) But the hints might serve to suggest, that once, there was a world not as complicated as it is today... or was it?

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BUGS:

"Persons who travel often meet with these vermin, and are sadly bitten with them. To prevent this, let your shirt, or night shirt be washed as ordinarily, well wrung, and then dipped in a solution of alum, or in a solution of camphor, and then dried. A sure preventive."

BUG POISON:

"The spirit of tar is a powerful remedy, applied by means of a brush; chloride of lime is a very good wash. Bugs have become so general a nuisance, much care is necessary to get rid of them. Bedsteads should be taken to pieces at the beginning of the year, and each part washed with a strong solution of corrosive sublimate. The crevices or cracks should be stopped up with putty, then the joints and crevices painted with white lead, to be well dried before the bed is put together. Bugs do not like paint, it is too cold for them. If the walls are infested, the paper should be removed, and the walls washed with the corrosive sublimate (stopping all cracks in the walls with plaster of Paris). The floor in inveterate cases, may be painted all round the skirting-board to the extent of four inches."

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By hell these Victorians didn't give their bugs much of a chance, did they? Naturally I assume one would have to get one's servants to do this kind of work - one wouldn't have servants doing simple tasks like adjusting bung holes in beer kegs whilst one starts tearing the house to pieces chasing bugs, would one? No, one jolly well wouldn't...!

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JOTTO Turn 9

We have a winner! Rosie Roberts takes her guess and writes:-

"Deeply though it pains me, I have to make what amounts to an accusation, viz: IF you scored/typed Nicholas Whyte's 6th Jotto move wrongly THEN the Jotto answers are as follows: SINKER, POSTAL, WYVERN, BUCKET, JAGHIR, FIMBLE."

...And Rosie gets them all right!! I'm amazed - not only does she manage to guess them correctly so quickly, but she also checks her guesses alongside other players scores thus proving my fallibility. This is all Sharp's doing... damn the man. My congratulations to Rosie though, an impressive result, you win for yourself the magnificent, not to be repeated, prize of 3 free issues of Dib.

(Cont'd over.....)

As for my excuse for Nicholas Whyte's 6th Jotto move... you're not going to believe this... but I copied down a friend's phone number on the back of the same envelope Nicholas sent in with his word on! I suppose I could apologise for this slight error... but surely Nicholas is partly to blame as he sent his word in two days after the deadline, scrawled on the back on an envelope, consequently I didn't spot his word until after I had adjudicated all the rest.

JOTTO: I'VE DECIDED I'D LIKE TO RUN ANOTHER GAME OF THIS. So, all those interested in playing another Jotto game in Dib should get their names in for next issue. And, just so I don't get any moans from that cheapskate Sharp, the gamefee will be 50p, with all money collected going towards the prize. Roll up, roll up, anyone wanting to show this Rosie Roberts girl how it's done, scratch your mark on a piece of paper and send it in to me. The rules are quite simple:-

I choose six words from the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, each six letters long. Each month you send in one word and I then score each letter against each of my six words. For instance, if you submitted DETOUR and the six secret words were: RESORT, BASKET, GENTLE, PRIEST, MORTAR, BOTTLE the scores would be 4, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3 respectively. Obvious aim is to find all six words.

When you think you know all six words you may take a guess at them (you must guess all six) - but you must get ALL six right! Get one wrong and you're out. Anagrams of the secret words are accepted. And that's all there is to it... The first entry I allow three guesses to speed things up.

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#### LETTERS

LUKE CLUTTERBUCK: "I have finally managed to get a job now thank God, in advertising of all things! So I have moved closer to the city (just up from Bondi). ((I hated Sydney. COA noted in Dibs and Drabs))

You remember I was asking you if you knew of any Australian zines? I asked a few other people and none of them knew of any either. You know why? There aren't any! Well that's not strictly true, there is one but it costs about £7 gamesfee and £3.50 a move, plus the cost of the magazine itself. It seems crazy to me that I can subscribe to three zines 17,000 miles away for less than I can to one in the same country.

Anyway, all things considered, I have taken the insane step of starting a zine of my own! Well I was surprised. I thought, no zines... there must be no players. But I was wrong. Since I first put it out that I was starting I've been getting at least one new subscriber a day - and that's just by word-of-mouth in Sydney! It's great! I've had people coming up asking to GM games, write articles - one bloke even wants to know how to start another zine on his own! No doubt it will level out sooner or later but I was just wondering: any hints?!

Did I read somewhere that Martin LeFevre sent out some sort of booklet to prospective zine editors? Are there authorities to inform, and do I need to tell Gibson's games/Avalon Hill? Also, do you know who could tell me about how they went about getting the 'flyers' in the actual boxes of Diplomacy? Maybe I could organize something here - I don't know."

((Well, before I answer anything else, addresses to try: 'The Novice Editors Package' is compiled and edited by Geoff Challinger (editor of Home of the Brave), but is supplied, for a fee of £1, by Paul Seegal, 29 Heath Hurst Road, London, NW6. Some worthwhile hints. Martin LeFevre merely distributes 'The Novice Package' for new hobby members.

As for getting Diplomacy box flyers in Australian games, that's a good idea. The person to try here for information is our own flyer Custodian, Richard Bairstow, 20 Queen's Drive, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 6PP. Ask him how he went about it, then see what Gibsons have to say. I'm sure they'll only be too pleased in the interest, and once things like that are started off you should have forms pouring in - the birth of the Australian hobby!

As for an Australian zine, I have recently heard of one, called Black Hole

and comes from Larry Dunning, P.O. Box 111, Midland, 6056, Australia. Best of luck with your own zine, Luke - let's see a copy when you get it out.))

JOHN PIGGOTT: "Dib's been getting a bit serious of late, hasn't it? ((This, unfortunately, is true)) If this goes on you'll have to consider changing the title to Lokasenna.

The Ethiopia problem ((Oh great, this'll cheer the column up!)) would be easy to solve if the Ethiopian government wanted it to be solved. The fact is that Africa is relatively underpopulated and has easily the capacity to feed all its people and produce a large surplus besides. Droughts tend to be local in character, and while they do lead to periods of famine African peasant farmers have known how to cope with them for thousands of years. All they have to do is store food from the good years in order to eat it during times of shortage (Genesis 41, 17-36 gives a reasonably succinct account of how it was done on one occasion); or, alternatively, they can sell surplus produce when harvests are abundant in order to buy food from elsewhere during famine. This is all sensible and obvious; but under Col. Mengistu's regime those who store food are denounced as hoarders, while those who make their living transporting food from place to place are denounced as profiteers. Thus when the famine did arrive there was no way that the people could cope. Mengistu and his henchman, meanwhile, received over a billion dollar's worth of foreign 'aid' from Western states during the past six years. Most of this they spent on arms, which they used to make war on their own people. Anything left over they seem to have spent on whisky. The onset of the famine allowed them to intensify their war since they could now use starvation as an additional weapon.

Mass starvation is a dreadful thing, of course; but even so I can't help feeling that the famine appeal now going on is treating the symptoms, not the cause. In the long term, what the Ethiopians really need is to be left alone... but with a Soviet-backed regime in Addis there's not much chance of that. ((Nothing much I can say to that... I agree with what's said.))

Now we come to Gil Von Gavel and the Miner's strike. He is so right - we can indeed read everything there is to know about the strike in the New Statesman. But I wouldn't read that turgid rag unless I were paid to do it! The best story I've heard about the miner's strike came about when the NUM parasites were begging for grocery items for the strikers families. They had a big plastic crate full of cans, and an old dear came up, read their sign 'Miners Christmas Appeal', and asked, "How much?" The reply came: "As much as you like"; so she helped herself to a few tins of salmon from the crate and walked away. I only wish I was there, and could have plucked up the courage to do the same.

Oh dear, this is all too serious. Bring back Larry Trask and his bowls of Gumbo. I expect Richard Sharp thinks Gumbo is the fifth Marx Brother."

((Richard Sharp probably WAS the fifth Marx Brother - he's certainly old enough. I'm sure that's one of the reasons he doesn't have a TV in the house, he sees them as some form of magic crystal, only on par with yon magical electrical bulb in't ceiling.

Actually, joking apart, a few months ago I listened in total fascination to some old timer going on about this very thing. He was telling me about how scary it felt for the first time to just flick a switch and all this power brightly illuminated the whole house. How Science Fiction/Fantasy in those days consisted of stories of things like bi-planes with wings dotted all over with spikes - before any 'planes had flown. He said flying to other planets wasn't even considered - just the thought of flying was enough of an idea to grasp for SF fans. I suppose the clincher to how ancient this old man was, was the fact that his father used to tell him of stories of the Whitechapel Murders when The Ripper was on the prowl. Great stuff. I suppose the fear of flicking a light switch must be similar to grown ups today in regards to computers or perhaps videos. I know when I got my first video, I daren't press buttons before CAREFULLY reading and rereading the rules for fear of blowing something. Yet today's kids don't bother, they just plow in and confidently push anything.

Bloody smart-alec kids.

Sorry about not being able to bring back Larry Trask though, John, he seems to have dropped out of the hobby after your last tirade. You must have this effect on people.))

TIM COLLIEU. "This is the first time and hopefully the last, I will ever react to something Richard Sharp has said. But the comment that India and other countries 'agitated for an independence they were unfit to receive' brought to my mind a comment Gahndi made: "It is better to rule ourselves badly, then you (the Empire) to rule us well"

If Britain hadn't let go of her colonies when she did, how many Northern Irelands would there be dotted around. Look at France, Algeria in the 60s and New Caledonia. I would suggest the reaction against Imperialism by a suppressed country has always and will always be with us, from the decline of the Hapsburg Empire through the dismemberment of the British Empire to the inescapable collapse of America, which will have to happen one day!! In fact the only Country which has managed to maintain all its influence for well over a century is Russia/Soviet Union. It has maintained its autocratic regime by what ever name you wish to call it, and this is uninfluenced by maintaining a constant principle in its policies. No one can complain, and Russia has always landed on its feet after a war. Perhaps there is something in this, after all what Empire has not been founded on exploitation? Which bring us full circle to Ethiopia and the rest of the third World."

((Er... yes - for God's sake let's keep Northern Ireland out this.))

MIKE POLLARD: "Your comments, Mr Tweedy, during and after Gil Von Cavel's letter, reflect a badly blinkered mind and very suspect morals. ((You're kidding... a blinkered mind yes...))

Other countries do not sell cheaper coal through automation, in fact the majority do not sell cheaper coal than ours. Their governments give larger subsidies and better investment for their coal industries. Our mines were originally purchased from private coal owners, who are still being paid off today with massive interest rates. The NCB prefer to pay out more to make miners redundant than it would cost them to keep them working at "uneconomical" mines. The Tories would rather lose the country more money in order to give Maggie victory over the unions, than it would cost them to settle pay claims and invest in the industries. ((That isn't logical Mike, redundancy payments are once only, now if we were to pay the miners once only to work at uneconomic pits, that would be an improvement....))

I agree - automation cannot be stopped, but that is no excuse for not providing for the people affected by the new technology. If automation is economically efficient - it should mean either cheaper goods for the community, or more profit for the company. The former is not happening - 'essential' goods and services are becoming more expensive, and only 'luxury' goods (computers etc) are cheaper. The latter is undoubtedly happening - but is this wealth being re-distributed? Is it hell. ((This is such a long letter. I better just pick out a couple of relevant pieces to answer.))

Would you care to define 'un-economical pits'? ((And...))

The NCB cannot relocate every miner from an uneconomical pit - you'd end up with 10 times the necessary workforce at the most profitable pits, and the rehousing would be impossible."

((Although I found it interesting, I apologise for not being able to print this letter fully, but there just isn't the space. But to answer your questions: The matter of what happens to profit through automation doesn't really, or shouldn't really come into it - surely one must automate to stay competitive? And surely profit should be plowed back into a job for it to stay competitive? Why cry for redistribution of wealth all the time, if you got it would you plow your higher wages back into the company? Certainly you won't. Yet as far as I can see it's the company that counts; if that fails, your job fails, doesn't it?

As for uneconomical pits, I would define that as (a) it's too difficult to

get hold of the coal, or (b) there's not much coal there to be got out. In regards (a) yes, the government could step in to help with extra expenses, but as to (b) what can one do? If there's no bloody coal, there's no coal, the mining community will HAVE to move somewhere else.

As to your last point I don't understand the attitude anyway - if one cannot be relocated then one should be retrained to do something else, although I agree rehousing could be a problem. I've never agreed with the way British Rail had to keep on and pay fireman after the move to diesel trains. To me that's the height of stupidity. You either do a job or you don't... a fair days work for a fair days pay... why should it have to be more complicated by workers demanding rights which are not theirs? No-one forces men to become miners, or anything else (although I agree in some cases circumstances might). If there's a job going one can apply for it, if there isn't why DEMAND there should be one? It's surely like someone coming up to me and demanding that I employ him and find him work, isn't it?))

GEORGE NORTH: "The Letter Column: Well it isn't the same crazy winner of the Best Letter Column like it used to be is it? Where has all the humour gone? ((Don't you start, North, I'm having enough trouble with Close!))

I suppose I must rouse myself slightly and write a reply to Richard Sharp although, goodness knows it hardly seems worth the bother. There is rubbish and rubbish, and mine is deliberate. It isn't easy you know and took years of practice. What Richard writes isn't for me to say but I remember at one time it was the done thing to cross swords with the great man and become famous by association. To be mentioned in an article or letter by Richard Sharp was a feather in the cap for any up and coming scribe. I personally had nothing but admiration for him as a writer and his stories appearing in Games and Puzzles, about Bedbug Island used to have me in fits.

Today? Well I leave the reader to decide for himself whether what I write is rubbish and whether Richard is coming up with anything better. All I can say is they should have seen him at his best in the old days.

But about congresses, well I reckon the big problem is that nobody is fully enlightened before the event. In the chess Club we have the big event of the year which is the AGM. We have the second biggest which is the Chess Congress where we all meet to play games only, although those that like a drink get together in the evening for a social do.

And we have the Get Together or 'Social' where those that like a good booze up get together in a specified public house and talk shop, or whatever.

So you see, everybody knows exactly what is going to take place before the event.

In the Games Club every meeting is called a 'Con' and Richard may well be right and me wrong, because I always associated the name 'Con' with our Chess Congress and assumed the idea was to meet and play games.

So what is really wrong is that we are not making it clear whether we are a 'Congress' for playing or a social event for drinking and fraternising. There is a difference, you see? So what is happening so far is that half the people want to play games and the other half wander up the pub and get stoned out of their eyeballs. The trouble is they all come crashing back the minute the pubs are shut and want to liven the place up by being loud and rowdy and silly.

And before you think I have anything against those who drink, let me remind you that I work at the Romford Brewery and have seen it all before. Drunks are never a pleasant sight, you know, but they do help keep us brewery workers in our jobs."

((What you say about cons is all true, George, however it didn't seem that way a couple years ago, or even when I had my own house cons. It may be that the hobby is attracting a younger, more immature sort of person these days; the type that thinks it's manly to bust into a meeting half cut. If this is the case, I can't see that much can be done about it, other than cons becoming more selective. I agree though drunks can sometimes be embarrassingly pushy.))



DAVE BIRD. "I went to a meet last Friday in London, organised by Graham Freeman. Nothing against anyone there, but I probably will not go to another meet; it rather spoilt my outlook on the hobby. My expectations were much greater than was realised."

((Please, don't judge all cons because of one, Dave, try a few others, get to know the people you like from the ones you don't like. Chances are you'll get to go to an invite-only house con sometime and enjoy yourself with a crowd that likes the things you do. But why not write and tell us what went wrong. More to the point, why not tell us what it was you expected.))

DAVE (CONT.): "'Ere wots Sharp, meen by 'uneducated' tehn? I'll 'ave 'im no I went too a reel good schule - it were even approved - so their!!

Now then, to other matters. Thank you for Dib 45 - I see 'we' are taking on certain airs now - 'One of the longer established zines' no less. Next I suppose Dib will carry the Royal Crest and we shall all have to pass the port to the left. Well to ensure that Dib survives to reach a ripe old age, the offer of the 'Bowaters Special' is still on. Of course Tippexing out the 'Government Property' could take a while, proving to be rather tedious - I know, give it to Sharp to do - they suit each other so admirably!

Well I should be all set for Wembley now, now that Norwich are in the Semis of the Milk Cup. I went to see their FA Cup 3rd Round 2nd replay match at Brum with a group of friends. Unfortunately we were installed amongst the Brum supporters, so I as reduced to saying 'Mmm' all the time, lest my accent reveal my country of origin! ((Sensible lad))

Whilst on the subject of culture, would you or any of your readers know the title of the Music to the 'Maxwell Tapes' advert - it sounds familiar, but I can't place it?"

((I believe the title you're looking for is 'Night on Bear Mountain', but I don't know which group played it... doesn't sound like Boy George.))

To all Dib readers, there appears to be a vacancy in an African gold mine - now, all those people moaning about being unemployed, planes leave daily. Read on...

IAIN FORSYTH: "I'm pleased to let you know that my job hunting was a success and I will be returning to the U.K. I've got one firm job offer - from an economic consultancy company in London - and one strong possibility. The possibility is with a tin smelting company in Hull and is the job I'm hoping to get. The pay there is better, I would be staying in a technical field and of course house prices promise to be much more realistic in the North East.

Anyway I've resigned from Grencor. I had enjoyed my job here in S.A. very much but the social life (or lack thereof) was starting to get to me. I plan to do some travelling before coming back to the U.K. - I may make a trip up to Harare and the Victoria Falls. I expect to be back in Saltcoats around the end of March, so you could perhaps print a COA for me (again! sorry!).

My latest interest in the Wargames/Diplomacy/games hobby is Modern 1/300th scale miniature wargaming. I bought myself a Soviet Army while I was back and am rapidly going cross-eyed painting lots of little tanks green. It's funny how one's interests change. When I started off in the Hobby - back in the days when you were just a lad, Tom, 1977 - I was really into Diplomacy and board wargames. Then, for a while it was D&D and now its miniatures. So things have come almost full circle."

((Tin smelting company? Hull?! What a comedown from a South African goldmine, dodging native spears! Somehow you'll never again appear the hero I once thought you, Iain. Another one of life's images shattered.))

MIKE CLOSE "I must take you to task for the comments at the bottom of last month's lettercol. I have not moved over to write serious stuff - it's just that the only letters you print nowadays seem to be serious ones (barring

those from the Rt. Hon. Richard Sharp, of course). Frankly, the lettercol has gone downhill since you banned letters about chameleons, so you only have yourself to blame. Yes, you whingeing toad, it's all your fault! ((Cough, splutter, spluter, MY fault?!))

Let's face it, how can geni (geniuses?) such as myself, Martin Allen and Cathy Cunning get ideas and inspirations from a lettercol that spends most of its time discussing Ehtioopia or other subjects that can safely be left to Bob Geldorf et al. ((Precisely...))

What we need is a bit more insanity in Dib. ((Is there enough ROOM?)) So here's something to start you off (and get yourself in trouble with the wife). You remember those old washboard bands that they used to have? (You know, the washboard played on the knuckles, someone on the spoons, Jews, Harp, and a double bass made out of a cardboard box, broom handle and elastic). Well how much elastic from Jan's knickers do you need to make a decent double bass? Off you go and find out."

((I refuse to talk about Jan's knicker elastic just like that, now if it was the mother-in-laws, it wouldn't that much (relatively speaking - s'cuse pun) - she uses a strong knicker elastic that would perhaps equip a full orchestra. (I only know because I've seen them overshadowing the Kóúsé lawn when she hangs them out to dry.) Anyway, they were not cardboard boxes we used. We never used cheap trash like that, we used the best; the old foil-lined tea chests. Made a luvrly boom boom sound they did...))

And of course to finish...

LUKE CLUTTERBUCK: "I was sitting on the bus on the way home from work, idly examining some oversized pig-woman on the other side of the aisle. I noticed that she was engaged in the favourite hobby of her species, that of seat hogging. You know, she takes up less than a third of the surface area but after skillfull manipulation of her associated baggage (a talent developed over years of intense study) she manages to completely cover all remaining space. And I thought 'What the f--- has she got in those bags?! She must have enough food there to last two whole seasons.'

Now the introspective lateral connections being what they are in my crazy loaf, I suddenly realised: Hobby? Seasons? S0:..."

((So Luke sends in his orders. But I had to print the lead up. What a graphic paragraph. It's nice to know that even half way around the world things are so rarely different. This is a picture, painted in words, a short study of human nature that shows one exactly what writing is all about. If only I could put down what I see in words like that. Great stuff.))

Well that's it for another issue, my thanks to all those who sent interesting letters about unions and the picket line violence. Some of you have, by all accounts suffered directly from the troubles. However I am finding that though the letters are interesting, (especially yours James) the more serious the letter column gets the more depressing it seems to become, from now on I shall try to put only uninteresting er well amusing letters to try and regain my unique style I once had.... mass drop outs are now expected!!!! Seriously, I am sure those of you who have no job, no money, no love life, no prospects, general body disorders can think of some amusing little anecdote to regail us all with, how about an amusing account of "How I broke my leg", or "the day the house got burnt" ....stuff like that.

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Ah, a little bit of space here to fill. As you can see the computer is working okay now (t must be, it printed this, didn't it?). All it needed was a power pack, costing £85 - that should see it through another 4 or 5 years, it's as good as new.

ATTENTION: I've just found out that the Sopwith boxed game (see pages 19 and 20) is now being released around March/April time by 'Quantum Games'. Order yours now.

'Kevin' (1983DI)Autumn 1908

A GERMAN VICTORY!

ENGLAND (Richard Wernick) F(StP-nc)stands, *F(Lpl)stands

GERMANY (Victor Hall) A(Sil)-Ber, A(Boh) S A(Pie)-Tyr, A(Ven) S A(Pie)-Tyr, A(Pie)-Tyr,
A(Yor) S F(Wal)-Lpl, F(Wal)-Lpl, A(Mar)-Pie, F(SKA) S F(NTH)-Nor,
F(Swe) S F(NTH)-Nor, F(NTH)-Nor, F(TYS)-Nap, A(Rom) S F(TYS)-Nap,
A(Bur)-Mun

RUSSIA (R.J. Lampard) A(Smy)=Con, A(Ank) S A(Smy)-Con, A(Alb)-Tri, A(Ser) S A(Alb)-Tri,
A(Vie) S A(Alb)-Tri, *A(Tyr)-Mun, A(Pru)-Ber, A(Fin)-StP, [[A(Mos) S
A(Fin)-StP]] ((NO SUCH UNIT)), A(Gal)-War, A(Rum)-Gal, A(War) stands
unordered

TURKEY (Anarchy) Has: A(Gre), F(Tun), *A(Nap), *F(Con)

Retreats: ENGLISH F(Lpl) dies (NRO); RUSSIAN A(Tyr) dies (NRO); TURKISH A(Nap) dies; TURKISH F(Con) dies

Winter 1908 Adjustments:

ENG: (Lpl), StP, (Nor)	for 1
GER: Kie, Ber, Mun, Hol, Bel, Par, Den, Bre, Por, Mar, Spa, Ven, Edi, Lon + Lpl, Swe, Nor, Nap, Rom	for 19
RUS: Mos, War, Vie, Rum, Bud, Tri, (Swe), Ser, Sev, Smy, Bul + Con, Ank	for 12
TUR: (Con), (Ank), Gre, (Nap), Tun, (Rom)	for 2
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PRESS:

LUTON AIRPORT: That's it then lads, a good hard game to the finish, well done to all - don't forget though to get your game end statements in for next issue.

Vic - All: Best Wishes and thanks to all especially the two Richards and Mike.

'Lamfhada' (1983EE)Spring 1907

GERMANY STRIKES BACK? - FRANCE FEELS LE CRUNCH

AUSTRIA (James Cowie) A(Bud) S RUSSIAN A(Gal)-Rum, A(Gre)-Ser, A(Alb) S ITALIAN F(ION)-Gre,
A(Vie)-Boh, A(Tri)-Vie

ENGLAND (David Crawford) F(NTH)-ENC, A(Edi)-Lpl

FRANCE (Alan Sharples) A(Bel)-Ruh, *A(Hol) S A(Bel)-Ruh, A(Bur) S A(Bel)-Ruh, A(Pic) S A(Bur),
F(Swe)-BAL, F(ENC)-NTH, *F(NWG) S F(ENC)-NTH, F(Bre)-ENC, F(Lpl)stands

GERMANY (R.J. Lampard) A(Kie) S A(Ruh)-Hol, A(Ruh)-Hol, A(Mun)-Bur

ITALY (Paul Donley) A(Apu) S A(Ven), A(Ven)stands, F(ION)-Gre, F(TYS)-ION

RUSSIA (Mike Close) F(Nor)-NWG, F(BAR) S F(Nor)-NWG, F(Den)-Swe, A(StP)-Fin, A(Gal)-Rum,
F(BLA)-Con, A(Ukr)-Sev

TURKEY (Simon Craddock) F(Bul-sc)-Con, A(Con)-Bul, F(AEG) C A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)-BLA

Retreats: FRENCH A(Hol)-Bel; FRENCH F(NWG)-NAO

PRESS:

France - Russia: This alliance is working well so far.

LUTON AIRPORT - Paul: As to your problem of seeming to have too many friends, I do sympathise, and I know how you feel. But, chin up there, and wield the knife - stab, stab, stab... you know it makes sense.

'Macha' (1983EN)Spring 1907

THE SOLID FRENCH LINE STILL ADVANCES

ENGLAND (Anarchy) Has: F(Lon), F(Lpl)

FRANCE (Bill Haygarth) A(StP)stands, F(BAR) S A(StP), F(NWG)-Npr, F(NTH) S A(Kie)-Den, A(Kie)-Den, F(ENC)-MAO, F(Wal)-ENC, A(Bre)-Gas, A(Bur)-Mar, A(Ruh) S A(Mun), A(Mun) S A(Hol)-Kie, A(Hol)-Kie

ITALY (Alan Frost) A(Pie)-Mar, F(TYS)-GOL, F(Nap)-TYS, A(Tyr)-Mun, A(Boh) S A(Tyr)-Mun, A(Bud)-Gal, F(AEG)-EMS, F(Bul-sc)-AEG, A(Ser)-Bul, F(Gre)-ION

RUSSIA (Steve Rennie) A(Mos) S A(Lvn)-StP, A(Lvn)-StP, [[A(Sil) S ITALIAN A(Boh)-Mun]], A(Ber)-Kie, *F(Den) S A(Ber)-Kie, F(BLA) S A(Arm)-Ank, A(Arm)-Ank

TURKEY (Uif Jiretorn) F(Smy) S A(Ank)-Con, A(Ank)-Con, F(Con)-BLA

Retreats: RUSSIAN F(Den) dies (NRO)

PRESS:

Turkey - France: Good luck!Turkey - Italy: So now you trust Russia and attack France who you have to thank for still being in this campaign. Well, so it goes.'Nuada' (1984BN)Spring 1904

THE VICE SLOWLY CLOSING AROUND FRANCE - NOT HELPED BY ENGLISH UNITS UP FOR GRABS

AUSTRIA (John Cavanagh) A(Vie)-Tri, A(Rum) S A(Ser)-Bul, A(Ser)-Bul, F(ION)-AEG, F(Gre) S F(ION)-AEG, A(Bud)stands

ENGLAND (Martin Allen) F(NWG)-NTH, F(Edi) S F(NWG)-NTH, F(ENC)-Wal

FRANCE (Paul Morton) A(Pic)-Bel, A(Par) S A(Gas)-Bre, A(Gas)-Bre

GERMANY (Mike Close) F(NTH)-Lon, A(Yor) S F(NTH)-Lon, A(Ber)-Pru, F(HEL)-NTH, F(Swe)-Nor, A(Bel) S A(Bur), A(Bur) S ITALIAN A(Mar)-Gas

ITALY (R.J. Lampard) A(Pie)-Ven, F(Spa-nc) S A(Mar)-Gas, A(Mar)-Gas, F(Ven)-ADS, F(Nap)-TYS

RUSSIA (Cathy Cunning) F(Nor) S ENGLISH F(NWG)-NTH, A(Fin)-StP, A(StP)-Lvn, F(Arm)-Sev, A(Mos)-Ukr

TURKEY (Chris Sandow) *F(AEG) S A(Con)-Bul, A(Con)-Bul, F(BLA)-Ank

Retreats: TURKISH F(AEG) dies (NRO)

COA: Paul Morton, 34 Harriet Way, Bushey, Herts.

PRESS:

England (Govt) - Germany: Due to the excessive burden of work which is piling up on me, I offer you absolute control of my units, if you refuse I'll just go into Anarchy. ((Well, that'll put the cat amongst the pigeons))LUTON AIRPORT - Austria: Sorry, you can't order builds until Autumn 1904 - as you suspected.Russia - World: ...And then from the blackest pit of hell it rose. A demon of the highest rank, oozing with slime. It took on human form and then it spoke: "So Cathy, I'm Germany and you're Russia. How about an alliance? We can crush England and don't worry about Austria. He does whatever I say."England (Govt) - All: I'm sorry to say that I've not put as much effort/interest into this game as I would/should have liked due to many reasons, mainly work. I'm sorry therefore if this game has not had the complexity or interest of previous ones which I have played in. I therefore accept responsibility if this game has had a one-sided nature from the start.Russia - Tweedybird: So what happened to France and England? Did Mike threaten to visit them? What charm that guy has. ((Wot!?!... Now listen to me my nice, sweet, naive little Cath, that Close fellow has about as much charm as a chewed-up, ichor-covered, hairless rabbit's foot! Whatever you do, don't listen to him; don't let him even talk. Whenever I do any diploming with him I have my fingers

stuck in my ears. This ploy seems to work fine, until he sends me a letter!))
 Moscow - Budapest: It's me, remember, your buddy, your pal. The one who wrote when no one else did.
 Look, we can still talk about this can't we?
 Moscow - Rome: I think it's time we did some serious talking, don't you?

'Olven' (1984B0)Spring 1905

ENGLAND STILL HANGING IN THERE

AUSTRIA (Mick Bensted) A(Vie)-Bud, A(Rum) S A(Vie)-Bud, F(ADS)-Tri
 ENGLAND (Grahame MacLennan) F(Cly)-Lpl
 FRANCE (Colin Pickard) F(IRI)-MAO, F(Bre)-MAO, F(Lon)-NTH, F(ENC) S F(Lon)-NTH, A(Tyr) S
 ITALIAN A(Tri)-Ven, A(Pic)-Bel, A(Bur) S A(Pic)-Bel, A(Par) S A(Bur),
 A(Edi)stands
 GERMANY (Kenny Adams) F(Den)-SKA, F(Swe)-Nor, F(StP-sc)-GOB, A(War)-Ukr, A(Hol)-Bel, A(Ru-) S
 A(Kie)-Mun, A(Kie)-Mun, A(Mun)-Tyr
 ITALY (Nick Lourie) A(Tri)-Vie, A(Ven)-Tri, A(Rom)-Ven, F(IOW)-ADS, F(Nap)-Apu
 RUSSIA (Nicholas Whyte) A(Gal)-War, A(Mos) S A(Gal)-War
 TURKEY (Ian Winstanley) F(AIb) S ITALIAN A(Ven)-Tri, A(Ser)-Rum, A(Gre)-Bul, A(Con) S
 A(Gre)-Bul, F(Bul-sc)-AEG, F(Ank)-BLA

Retreats: None

'Pryderi' (1984DA)Autumn 1904ENGLAND DROPS FROM SIGHT WITHOUT MAKING BUILDS
 (This game, the bane of my life...)

AUSTRIA (Pete Mason) A(Vie)-Tri, F(AIb)-Tri, A(Tri)-Bud, A(Gre) S A(Bul), A(Bul) S A(Gre)
 ENGLAND (Ralph Baker) *F(Lon)stands
 FRANCE (John Piggott) A(Yor)-Lon, F(ENC) S A(Yor)-Lon, A(Bur)-Mar, F(GOL)-TYS, F(Edi)-NTH,
 A(Bel) makes rude noises at 'Puke-in-bed', F(Tun) makes rude noises at
 Luton Airport
 GERMANY (Nick Hoyle) F(NTH)-Den, F(HEL) S F(NTH)-Den, F(Den)-Kie, A(Hol) S F(Den)-Kie,
A(Mun)-Ber
 ITALY (Mike Pollard) [[A(Pie) S FRENCH F(GOL)-Mar]], A(Ven)stands, F(IOW)-Tun, F(TYS) S
F(IOW)-Tun
 RUSSIA (David Crawford) A(Nor)stands, A(Swe)-Den, F(BAL)-Ber, A(Sev)-Arm, F(BLA) S A(Sev)-Arm,
 F(Rum) S F(BLA)
 TURKEY (Iain Forsyth) A(Smy)-Arm, F(Ank) S A(Smy)-Arm, A(Con)stands, F(AEG) S A(Con)

Retreats: ENGLISH F(Lon) dies

COA: Iain Forsyth, 6 Ardrossan Road, Saltcoats, Ayrshire.

Winter 1904 Adjustments:

AUS: Vie, Bud, Ser, Tri, Gre + Bul	Buils: F(Tri)	for 6
ENG: (Lon), Edi	No Buils Ordered	for 1
FRA: Par, Bre, Mar, Por, Spa, Lpl, Bel + Lon, Tun	Buils: F(Bre), A(Par)	for 9
GER: Mun, Ber, Kie, Hol, Den	No Change	for 5
ITA: Rom, Nap, (Tun), Ven	Disbands A(Pie)	for 3
RUS: Mos, War, StP, Sev, Swe, Rum, Nor	Buils: A(War)	for 7
TUR: Smy, Ank, Con, (Bul)	Disbands F(AEG)	for 3

PRESS:

Bedbug Island: I have returned. ((And there came at once a mighty muttering from the crowd: Boo, hiss, go away... undesirable blackguard... traitor... Dolchstoss lover!))

Did you all like the Christmas cards Tom sent you? He managed to create the maximum embarrassment in my household by making sure his card arrived too late for us to send one back - naughty, naughty. Furthermore, by enclosing Dib with his cards Tom was able to make us pay the postage on them. What a cheapskate he is! ((Cheapskate?! - good, sound economical sense, that's what that was.))

Turning to the game, I see that the maestro has once again split the adjudication between two pages. If I were playing Russia or Turkey I wouldn't want to share a page with Piggott either, ((my sentiments exactly)) but even so you'd never find this sort of thing in Dolchstoss (adv). Fact is, the only other prominent GM who does this is Richard Walkerdine, and readers can draw whatever conclusions they like from this 'coincidence'. As for the moves, well, it's France and Russia vs the rest again! Booring... I'm off to Taranis - maybe we'll something interesting there. ((That was a SLY underhand move, linking my name with Walkerdine, and then merely turning away. This hint of slander will not for long go unpunished don't you know! ...oh, loss of orders, separate adjudications where YOU don't get one, a yearly subscription to Mad Policy from an anonymous doner, things like that.))

'Quadri' (1984??)

Autumn 1903

GERMANY STANDS UP TO HIS NECK IN MUCK AND BULLETS AND GETS HIS BITS SHOT OFF

AUSTRIA (James Steele) F(Gre) S A(Ser)-Bul, A(Ser)-Bul, A(Alb) S F(Gre), A(Tri)-Ven,
A(Bud)-Tri

ENGLAND (Piers Shepperson) [[F(ENC) S FRENCH A(Gas)-Bre]], A(Bel)stands, F(HEL) S F(NTH)-Den,
F(NTH)-Den, F(NWG)-NTH

FRANCE (Alan Powis) A(Gas)-Lpl, F(MAO) C A(Gas)-Lpl, F(WAO) C A(Gas)-Lpl, A(Pic)-Bre,
[[A(Bur) S GERMAN A(Ruh)-Bel]]

GERMANY (Richard Wernick) *F(Den)stands, A(Mun)stands, A(Hol)stands, A(Ruh) S A(Hol), F(SKA)-NTH

ITALY (Martin Clifford-King) F(AEG)-Smy, F(TYS)-ION, A(Apu)stands, A(Ven)-Tri

RUSSIA (Richard Downes) F(Nor) S GERMAN F(SKA)-NTH, A(Fin) S F(Nor), F(Rum)-Bul-ec, F(BLA) S
F(Rum)-Bul-ec, A(Mos)-Sev, A(Sev) stands unordered

TURKEY (R.J. Lampard) A(Bul) S A(Con), A(Con) S A(Bul), A(Ank) S A(Arm), A(Arm) S A(Ank)

Retreats: GERMAN F(Den) dies (NRO)

COA: From 23/3/85 to 29/4/85 Martin Clifford-King will be at 11 Lordsbury Field, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 9PE.

Winter 1903 Adjustments:

AUS: Tri, Bud, Vie, Ser, Gre	No Change	for 5
ENG: Lon, (Lpl), Edi, (Nor), Bel + Den	Disbands A(Bel)	for 4
FRA: Par, Bre, Mar, Spa, Por + Lpl	Builds: A(Par)	for 6
GER: Mun, Ber, Kie, Hol, (Den)	No Change	for 4
ITA: Rom, Nap, Ven, Jun + Smy	Builds: F(Nap)	for 5
RUS: Mos, StP, War, Sev, Swe, Rum + Nor	Builds: A(War)	for 7
TUR: Con, (Smy), Ank, Bul	GM Disbands A(Arm)	for 3

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PRESS:

Vienna - Moscow: What's up? Please write soon.

Bedbug Island (Spring 1903): Who is this France? Does he not know of logical cut off points for analysis? In Dolchstoss (adv) the report is ordered in logical, rather than alphabetical, order in the report. Thus making life easier, but no matter. Quadri is developing into a very interesting game. In the north the French fleets hover ominously over English supply centres and France has got Liverpool if he wants it. Germany is also looking weak to England. But how long will England maintain his attack with the oncoming threat of France. Russia is looking a bit spread out and still cannot move into Bulgaria. Italy is now looking in a more favourable position now that France has pulled his fleets out of the Med. Turkey is still in Dead End Alley (unintentional adv). I'm not too convinced that Luton Airport has got the alliances right in his title last season but we shall see.